

Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : Files

DATE: October 11, 1948

FROM : DeKoven Hunter, Production Division

SUBJECT: NOTES ON VISIT TO VITRO OCTOBER 5, 1948

REFER TO:

SYMBOL: PU:DeKH

X SECURITY & INTELLIGENCE 5-1

The writer visited Vitro Manufacturing Company, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania in company with Mr. Mahnken of the Audit Branch of this office on October 5, 1948.

The morning was spent discussing questions brought up by Mr. Mahnken as a result of his examination of Vitro's books. Messrs. Strod, Green, and Suder of Vitro were present. A number of points were cleared up for Mr. Mahnken and he then continued with his examination. Considerable discussion was held about executive salaries allocated to our work, about depreciation of buildings and equipment, obsolescence of equipment, and other miscellaneous items, all of which resulted in considerable clarification for all concerned.

In the afternoon, Messrs. Strod and Fleck and the writer visited the Canonsburg Plant and discussed a number of items which are covered below.

1. The scrap material being sent to Vitro is, in general, in terrible condition. Practically each container of scrap has to be hand picked, especially so, the sweepings. Examination showed them to contain wire, pieces of angle iron and sheet metal, other miscellaneous metal scrap, asbestos, pipe fittings, paper, parts of lunches, etc. Various installations are being contacted immediately and asked to do their best to eliminate anything other than recoverable U scrap from these containers.
2. The C special is ground at MCW to about "egg" size (as coal is graded). However, this material is considered by Vitro to be too large for burning and they regrind it to a maximum size of 1/4". St. Louis has been contacted to see if MCW can grind to the desired 1/4" size, thus eliminating considerable further handling by Vitro. The question of E.M. installing grinding equipment will be discussed.

Initial Review
Determination
U classified

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Date

P F Brown

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3. Vitro is at present processing their first C-special from MCW. The material being processed is the "special" C-special which is the 25% portion of a 25-75 separation instead of their normal 10-90 division. Very meagre preliminary results indicate about 4% U (80#/ton). The preliminary results of their plant run showed considerably higher chemical consumption than their laboratory results indicated.

The laboratory results indicated a probable consumption of 1400# of H_2SO_4 and 550# of NH_3 per ton of C-special. The first ton plant run required 2000# H_2SO_4 and 1228# NH_3 . For the 80# of contained U, this is \$20 for H_2SO_4 and \$36 for NH_3 . Adding these costs to further processing material costs, \$.98 per lb. of U_3O_8 produced is obtained. This is considerably in excess of their original estimate of \$.45 per lb. However, it is felt that further plant work should reduce consumption to more nearly the expected amounts.

4. Further experience in production has definitely shown that certain grinding and filtering equipment will not satisfactorily perform the necessary work on scrap materials in order to get them into condition for processing and accountability sampling. The rotary grinder has been moved to another building and is temporarily being used to grind C-Special. The roll mill will not properly grind the material and the vacuum filter (supplied by AEC) was in such poor condition that it would be necessary to replace it almost 100%. Furthermore, a representative of the filter company felt certain that the slurry to be handled was such that this filter would not handle it.

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Final Review
Unclassified

By
Date

P F Brown

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